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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/767,514	01/23/2001	John Derek Guest	BWT0061	3403

7590 10/15/2003
BAKER & DANIELS
Suite 800
111 East Wayne Street
Fort Wayne, IN 46802

EXAMINER

BOCHNA, DAVID

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3679

DATE MAILED: 10/15/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/767,514

Applicant(s)

GUEST, JOHN DEREK

Examiner

David E. Bochna

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 September 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-13 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3 and 9-13 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 4-8 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 1-2 and 9-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Vanesky.

In regard to claim 1, Vanesky discloses (fig. 2a, fig. 7) a hard molded plastic (see col. 6, lines 44-67) tubular coupling 26 having a cylindrical surface 36, 38 to engage with a corresponding surface of another component 24, the cylindrical surface having an annular substantially V-shaped recess 71 formed therein and a flexible annular diaphragm 70 disposed in the recess integrally with the coupling at the apex of the recess and having an outer periphery extending outwardly from the cylindrical surface to engage and grip the corresponding surface of the another component 24.

In regard to claim 2, the flexible diaphragm 70 is able to flex towards either side of the V when the coupling is engaged with the another component.

In regard to claim 9, the coupling has a second encircling annular recess (other side of coupling 26 to the left of 40) with a second flexible annular diaphragm 70 disposed therein to engage and grip in another component 24.

In regard to claim 10, the second recess is V-shaped and the second flexible annular diaphragm is formed in the apex of the V.

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In regard to claim 11, wherein the second diaphragm projects marginally above the flexible annular diaphragm to provide a gripping function, the flexible annular diaphragm providing a sealing function with the another component in which the coupling is engaged.

In regard to claim 12, the coupling has a head 40 at one end, wherein the second annular recess is formed between the V-shaped recess 71 and the head 40 (see fig. 14 where two diaphragms 112 and 46 are placed between 48 and 40).

In regard to claim 13, Vanesky discloses a hard molded plastic tubular coupling (see col. 6, lines 44-67) having a cylindrical surface 38 to engage with a corresponding surface of another component 24, the cylindrical surface having an annular recess 71 therein, the recess having a bottom and spaced side faces, a flexible annular substantially flat parallel sided diaphragm 70 formed integrally with the coupling at the bottom of the recess and having an outer periphery extending outwardly from the cylindrical surface to engage and grip the corresponding surface of another component 24.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Vanesky.

Vanesky discloses a coupling as described above. However, Vanesky does not disclose that the recess and diaphragm are formed on the outer cylindrical surface of the coupling. Vanesky instead discloses a recess and diaphragm formed on the inner cylindrical surface of the coupling

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to engage an outer surface of another component. However, it would have been obvious to make the coupling of Vanesky with the recess and diaphragm on the outer cylindrical surface because the reversal of components in a prior art reference, where there is no disclosed significance to such reversal, is a design consideration within the skill of the art. In re Gazda, 219 F.2d 449, 104 USPQ 400 (CCPA 1955); In re Japikse, 181 F.2d 1019, 86 USPQ 70 (CCPA 1950).

Allowable Subject Matter

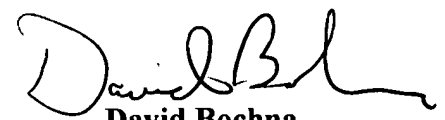
5. Claims 4-8 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to David E. Bochna whose telephone number is (703) 306-9040. The examiner can normally be reached on 8-5:30 Monday-Thursday and every other Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lynne H. Browne can be reached on (703) 308-1159. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 872-9326 for regular communications and (703) 872-9327 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-2168.


David Bochna
October 9, 2003